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PURGE OF ZDENEK HEJZLAR FROM THE
CZECHOSLOVAK YOUTH UNION

The following references to the purge of Zdenek Hejzlar from the CSM (Czechoslovak Youth Union) appeared in the Czechoslovak press at the time of the seventh plenary session of the central committee of the CSM, during which his expulsion was announced.

Numbers in parentheses refer to appended sources.]

At the seventh plenary session of the central committee of the CSM, held in Prague on 8 and 9 August, Ladislav Lis, secretary of the central committee, speaking on shortcomings in the work of the CSM, mentioned the harmful activity of Zdenek Hejzlar as one of the principal reasons for the failure of the CSM in fulfilling its obligations.

The central committee unanimously voted to relieve Hejzlar of all his official functions and to expel him from the CSM. It charged him with introducing harmful working methods into the CSM and with the commission of hostile acts against the organization, under the influence of the Slansky-Svermova gang. His personal life and his other political activities also were in conflict with the program of the CSM.

The central committee also expelled Rudolf Lebenhart, a member of the presidium of the central committee of the CSM and secretary of the Slovak central committee of the CSM, as a dissident and for having concealed important shortcomings in his past. At the same time, the central committee accepted the resignations of Engr Josef Grohman, member of the central committee of the CSM; Mikulas Lacek, member of the presidium of the central committee of the CSM; Stanislav Posusta, secretary of the central committee of the CSM; and Frantisek Vacek. It also relieved Karel Cervinka, secretary of the central committee, of all his official functions.

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Ernest Sykora, vice-chairman of the central committee of the CSM, stressed the great importance of breaking down the wall which Hejzlar had tried to build between the Czechoslovak Communist Party and the Komsomol on the one hand and the CSM on the other.(1)

The speech of Ladislav Lis, secretary of the central committee, before the seventh plenary session of the central committee contained the following discussion of the Hejzlar case:

"The presidium of the central committee conducted an investigation as to whether a significant number of errors had been committed in the work of the CSM. It was necessary not only to examine adherence to the political line but also to check the work of the officials who were responsible for adherence to the political line. As a result of this investigation, the presidium came to the conclusion that that faction of the presidium of the central committee headed by Hejzlar had failed. That is why it accepted the resignations of Vacek and Posusta, who had worked side by side with Hejzlar for a long time and so were not sufficiently critical of his improper policy and methods. The presidium also dismissed Lacek and Cervinka from their posts because of errors in their past.

"The presidium of the central committee today requests that the central committee approve the measures of the presidium against Zdenek Hejzlar, confirm his dismissal from the position of chairman of the CSM, and approve his expulsion from the CSM, since a thorough investigation has shown that Zdenek Hejzlar does not belong among us.

"He does not belong among us, because it was through him personally that Slansky, Svermova, Geminder, and that entire gang of traitors disseminated their harmful methods, whose purpose was to weaken the youth movement. Zdenek Hejzlar does not belong among us, because he was the chief and willing tool of the conspirators Slansky and company in the CSM. Hejzlar was the cause of unwholesome relations among individual workers of the secretariat of the central committee of the CSM, which resulted in further errors in the leadership of the CSM. He created an atmosphere of authoritarianism; deliberately fostered the cult of his own personality, pomposity, and grandiloquence; and strove to be the sole representative of youth at the expense of the organization.

"He suppressed criticism and always tried to maintain the impression of his own infallibility. Instead of revealing shortcomings and errors by means of criticism and self-criticism, he emphasized and overrated partial successes. Thus, he established a feeling of complacency and an uncritical attitude toward shortcomings in the leadership of the CSM. He concealed shortcomings behind such phrases as "difficulties of expansion," which permitted him to make excuses on objective grounds for his failure to resolve the situation.

"By his activities, Hejzlar isolated the CSM from the Czechoslovak Communist Party and from the Komsomol. He hampered the development of the victorious ideas of socialism in the CSM. He did not take sufficient advantage of the experience of the Komsomol in his work, failed to implement and take advantage of the efforts of other workers, and put off exploiting Komsomol experience, so that the CSM completely lacked the rich experience which the Komsomol offers us.

"In personnel policy, he acted irresponsibly. He surrounded himself with unreliable persons with discrepancies in their pasts and characters, provided that they willingly carried out his orders.

"In his personal life, also, he was a bad example to youth. He led a dissolute life, which he induced others to share, and so corrupted several of his co-workers. He tried to conceal his licentious life behind the false theory that personal life is separate from political activity and has nothing to do with it.

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"Hejzlar's attention was called to these characteristics and shortcomings several times, but he did not give them up, and to this day he has rejected criticism and self-criticism. Through his actions and his personal characteristics, he has prevented the growth of the collective spirit among leadership personnel and has disrupted the leadership of the CSM.

"His bourgeois personal life and ambition linked him in personal friendship with enemies of the People's Democratic regime who desired to restore capitalism in our country and to betray the republic to Western imperialists.

"The case of Hejzlar is a warning to every young official in a responsible position. Hejzlar is a typical example of a young man who enjoyed the confidence of the party and of youth and who, when he reached high office, backslid and became a renegade. Therefore, he lost the confidence of the central committee, lost the confidence of the entire CSM, and lost the confidence of the party.

"For these reasons, the presidium proposes that Zdenek Hejzlar be stripped of all his official functions in the CSM and expelled from membership in the CSM.

"The presidium of the central committee further recommends that the central committee approve its decision to remove from office Rudolf Lebenhart, former secretary of the Slovak central committee and member of the presidium of the central committee of CSM, because serious errors and shortcomings which recoiled against the entire movement have been discovered in his work. Lebenhart did the greatest damage through his schismatic activities, which were supported by Hejzlar. In his contact with the movement, he strengthened his own personal position rather than the authority of the Slovak central committee and its presidium.

"It has been shown further that Lebenhart had been extremely lenient in his work. He spread among those around him the theory of objective reasons, especially in the sector of tasks concerned with building up socialism. He made insoluble problems of most of the tasks, so that the workers around him felt bewildered, lost confidence in their own strength and ability, and a feeling of inadequacy spread among them. Lebenhart was a typical example of an irresponsible official who never tried to eliminate errors and deficiencies. He had an improper attitude toward people; by his behavior he spread fear around him.

"In personnel matters, Lebenhart adopted a two-faced, opportunistic attitude. He concealed serious deficiencies in his past from the Slovak central committee of the CSM.

"Lebenhart has been stripped of his official position as secretary of the Slovak central committee and member of the presidium of the central committee of the CSM because of serious errors and shortcomings in his work, schismatic activity, and questionable past. We propose that he be expelled from the CSM.

"All the personnel measures which the presidium has been taking lately have met with the absolute approval of the officials of the central committee and of the kraj and okres committees. Despite these major personnel changes in the leadership of the CSM, the authority of the central committee has not diminished; on the contrary, it has increased.

"The measures which have been taken have increased the authority of the central committee as well as the confidence of the masses of members and the officials in the central committee of the CSM. They have helped to cement our entire organization still further."(3)

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The speech of Josef Tesla, secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, before the seventh plenary session of the central committee of the CSM included the following remarks:

"A great many shortcomings in the work of the young were not accidents; they were the result of the wrong and harmful working methods introduced into the CSM by its chairman, Zdenek Hejzlar. Many of these shortcomings are serious. Today, it is the task of the entire youth movement to extirpate all wrong methods of work among young people.

"The greatest mistake was in the sector of production, in the work performed by youth in the factories. Though partial successes have been achieved since the meeting of the CSM in 1950, most of the work of the basic youth organizations has been completely cut off from factory life. In consequence, youth in the factory has never been led directly into the struggle for plan fulfillment. The youth organization has never concerned itself with how to meet plans and how shortcomings in the production sector can be remedied. Because the youth organization has not helped the young people to perform their production assignments better, the members of the CSM have not realized the necessity of turning to the CSM organization in the factory with their work problems, and the work of the basic organizations of the CSM in the factories is to improve, it is necessary to end the present situation."(2)

SOURCES

1. Prague, Rude Pravo, 10 Aug 52
2. Rude Pravo, 11 Aug 52
3. Prague, Mlada Fronta, 13 Aug 52

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